



STATE OF MAINE  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
STATE PLANNING OFFICE  
38 STATE HOUSE STATION AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

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April 11, 2008

Walter Elish, Chairman City Council  
Kenneth C. Arndt, Director of Planning and Development  
City of Presque Isle  
12 Second Street  
Presque Isle, ME 04769

Dear Mr. Elish and Mr. Arndt:

Thank you for submitting the 2007 City of Presque Isle Comprehensive Plan to the State Planning Office (Office) for review for consistency with the Maine Growth Management Act (M.R.S.A. 30-A §4312 et seq - the Act). The City and the Comprehensive Planning Committee are to be congratulated for all of the hard work that went into producing the Plan, and for its commitment to the time and money necessary to complete this Plan.

The Office has completed our review of your Plan for consistency with the Act using the “old” Comprehensive Planning Criteria Rule (Chapter 202), per the request of the City. This review includes the amendments Mr. Arndt later submitted via email. These additions include an Historic and Archaeological Resources Chapter, a new housing strategy, changes to the timetable for the Water Resources section, an improved Capital Investment Plan, and a new “Growth Area Map”). We are pleased to inform you that the State Planning Office finds the City of Presque Isle Comprehensive Plan, with the amendments noted above, **consistent** with the Act and Rule.

This finding consists of three sections:

1. The first provides the State Planning Office’s (SPO) general Conclusions about the Plan, indicating overall strengths and weaknesses.
2. The second section provides Suggestions for how the Town might modify the Plan or issues it might explore to improve or strengthen the Plan to better meet State and Local goals.
3. The third section identifies Other Agency Comments that have been received from State agencies, regional councils, or other interested parties (attached and printed on blue paper). As with the Suggestions from our office, incorporation of the Agency Comments are not necessary in order for the Plan to be found consistent, however they point up areas where the town might strengthen sections of the Plan to better address agency interest and goals.

## **SECTION I – CONCLUSIONS**

The Comprehensive Planning Committee clearly gathered and considered a great deal of information in developing the Plan. The Plan's analyses also indicate an understanding of the issues facing Presque Isle as the City looks to achieve the goals laid out in the Plan. The following elements are general observations about the Plan:

- The Plan recognizes the high level of public services offered to the citizens of the City and promises to maintain those services despite a projected loss in population.
- The formatting of the Plan varies between chapters and affects the cohesion of the Plan. It appears as if sections were written independently of one another.
- The Plan has a very thorough Land Use Chapter that presents the community's current land use very well.

## **SECTION II – SUGGESIONS**

Although not necessary for consistency with the Act, some constructive comments that would help strengthen your Plan are outlined below. Please let me know if you would like any additional information or suggestions.

1. The Plan illustrates the need for several new municipal expenditures but does not estimate the costs of these expenditures. For example the replacement of the municipal recreation center, expansion of the Turner Memorial Library, the public works equipment storage and maintenance facility, a new salt storage building, the major renovation to City Hall, proposed improvements to The Forum, etc. A rough estimate of these costs should be provided in the plan, as well as possible funding sources identified. If Presque Isle was growing and these projects were in response to growth, then the estimates would be required for a consistency finding.
2. Update and be sure to include all Beginning with Habitat and Maine Natural Areas Program data. Some of this data has not been adequately represented in the plan. Particularly inland wading bird and waterfowl habitats are inaccurately represented. This data was updated in the spring of 2006. Also, the city should address vernal pools. Although Significant Vernal Pools may or may not be mapped in Presque Isle they are now regulated as Significant Wildlife Habitat under the Natural Resources Protection Act. See these and additional comment in the attached Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife letter (blue paper).
3. The City may want to reconsider the "upgrading approximately 12 miles of local gravel roads to paved ways within the life of this comprehensive plan" (page 104). While paving additional roads may seem beneficial to the City, the long term affects can outweigh the benefit. Communities that pave gravel roads usually find that it facilitates the growth of its rural areas.
4. Policies and Strategies should be clearly identifiable.  
The policies and strategies of many sections of the plan are spread throughout the text of the Plan and presented in different formats, making implementation more challenging. We recommend creating a table of implementation strategies to facilitate implementation. See [www.maine.gov/spo/landuse/compplans/annotated/sample\\_implementation\\_table.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/spo/landuse/compplans/annotated/sample_implementation_table.pdf) for a sample implementation table.

Below is a sample way to lay out policies and strategy in the Plan. We strongly encourage Presque Isle to present policies and strategies in a consistent manner.

Cultural and Historic Resources		
<b>State Goal</b> To preserve the state's historic and archaeological resources.		
<b>Town Goal</b> To possess and promote an understanding of the archaeological, prehistoric, historic and cultural resources in <b><u>insert town name</u></b> , and work to recognize, preserve, and educate the public about the key elements of its past, including archaeological, prehistoric, and historic buildings, structures, sites, and artifacts.		
Cultural and Historic Policies		
Policy	Corresponding Strategy	
1. Promote the identification, preservation, and protection of valuable cultural and historic resources.	1	
Cultural and Historic Strategies		
Strategy	Responsibility	Year
1. Continue to seek funding for assessments that will identify prehistoric and historic archaeological sites and structures, and specify best practices to preserve them whenever possible.	CEO, PB, MHPC, Museum	2008 On-going
Key		
CEO – Code Enforcement Officer TA – Town Administrator NMDC – Northern Maine Development Commission	MHPC – Maine Historic Preservation Commission DHS – Maine Department of Human Services PB – Planning Board	

5. The City may want to create a new chapter entitled Agriculture and Forestry Resources and move forestry and agriculture discussion to the new section. Agricultural and Forestry discussions are currently on pages 12, 19-20, 44-47, 74-75, and 136-137 of the original copy reviewed by SPO.
6. We encourage the City to protect the quality of the Water Districts new water source. The Plan's strategy on page 190 says "The Water District also needs to work with the City of Presque Isle to implement land use controls to protect the (Water District) well site from contamination." This Office would like to emphasize the importance of protecting the quality of the City's new water source.

### **SECTION III – OTHER AGENCY COMMENTS**

The following agencies reviews and provided comments on your Plan:

- Maine Department of Environmental Protection
- Maine Historic Preservation Commission
- Maine Forest Service
- Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

These comments are attached (blue sheets). There comments provide additional detail and other suggestions that you might find useful as you complete your final draft. While the State Planning Office agrees that the inclusion of these suggestions would improve the plan, our finding of consistency is not conditioned on their inclusion.

In closing, thank you again for submitting this plan for review and for all of your hard work so far. If this Plan as amended becomes adopted we ask that you send a final copy to us for our records. If we can be of assistance in any way, please contact me at 287-3215 or [tom.miragliuolo@maine.gov](mailto:tom.miragliuolo@maine.gov). I would be happy to work with the Comprehensive Planning Committee or your consultant to address any questions you might have.

Best Regards,



Tom Miragliuolo  
Senior Planner

cc: Jay Kamm, Northern Maine Development Commission

Enclosures:

- Section IV - COMMENTS FROM OTHER STATE AGENCIES.
- Revised "Growth Area Map" received 4-10-2008

## **SECTION IV**

### **COMMENTS FROM OTHER STATE AGENCIES**